UNITED NATIONS

Convention to Combat Desertification

Distr.
GENERAL

ICCD/COP(3)/3
5 October 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Third session
Recife, 15-26 November 1999
Item 7(c) of the provisional agenda

PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

REPORT ON THE STATUS OF THE TRUST FUNDS IN 1999

Note by the secretariat

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In accordance with paragraph 9 of the Financial Rules for the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa (UNCCD), its subsidiary bodies and the Convention secretariat (decision 2/COP.1), a special fund for the voluntary financing of activities under the UNCCD (the Supplementary Fund) was established by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and is managed by the Executive Secretary of the Convention secretariat. The Supplementary Fund receives contributions pursuant to paragraphs 12(b) and (c), other than those specified in paragraphs 7 and 10 of the Financial Rules, including contributions earmarked, in accordance with paragraph 15, for:

(a) Support for the participation of some representatives of non-governmental organizations from affected developing country Parties, particularly the least developed among them, in sessions of the Conference of the Parties;

(b) Facilitation of assistance to affected developing countries in accordance with article 23, paragraph 2(c) and article 26, paragraph 7, of the Convention; and

(c) Other appropriate purposes consistent with the objectives of the Convention.

2. Likewise, in accordance with paragraph 10 of the Financial Rules, a special fund to support the participation of representatives of eligible States Parties affected by desertification and/or drought in the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies (the Special Fund) was established by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and is managed by the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD. The Special Fund receives contributions pursuant to paragraphs 12(b) and (c) earmarked to support the participation of representatives of developing, and, in particular, least developed country Parties affected by desertification and/or drought, particularly those in Africa, in the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies.

3. By decision 6/COP.2, the Conference of the Parties, inter alia:

(a) Noted the estimated requirements under the Supplementary Fund and the Special Fund submitted by the Executive Secretary;

(b) Invited Parties, as well as Governments of States not Parties, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, to make contributions to the Supplementary Fund and the Special Fund; and

(c) Requested the Executive Secretary to report to the Conference of the Parties at its third session on the status of the trust funds established under the Financial Rules.

4. In light of the above decision, the Executive Secretary submits herewith, for the consideration of the Parties, a report on the status of the Supplementary Fund and the Special Fund. The present document describes activities facilitated and expenditures incurred under the trust funds during the first half of 1999 (latest official expenditure report available at the time of document submission). It also indicates the estimated costs of activities to be facilitated for the remainder of 1999 if sufficient contributions are received in a timely manner. For consistency with the original cost plan presentation, activities are reported following the UNCCD programme and subprogramme under which the activities fall. Details concerning actual contributions received and pledges outstanding in 1999 for each of the funds are provided at the end of each section. The table of contributions and pledges for the two trust funds will later be updated (as document ICCD/COP(3)/3/Add.1) to reflect those received after submission.

5. Concerning the income of these trust funds, it will be recalled that, under the provisions of paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 52/198, any amounts remaining as at 31 December 1998 in the Trust Fund and Special Voluntary Fund established by General Assembly resolution 47/188 of 22 December 1992, shall be transferred, respectively, to the Supplementary Fund and to the Special Fund. In this manner, activities that remained unfinished in 1998 could be brought to completion in 1999. The balances as at 31 December 1998 of US$ 1,582,658 under the Trust Fund and of US$ 1,297,444 under the Special Voluntary Fund have therefore been transferred to the Supplementary Fund and Special Fund accounts, respectively. For a summary of activities financed under the Trust Fund and Special Voluntary Fund from their establishment in 1993 to their closure in 1998, see document INCD/COP(3)/INF.2.

II. SUPPLEMENTARY FUND
(Special Fund for the voluntary financing of activities under the UNCCD)

A. Summary tables of expenditures, contributions and outstanding pledges in 1999

Table 1. Supplementary Fund: summary of actual 1999 expenditure as at 30 June 1999, by programme

(US dollars)

Programme	Actual January-June	Projected July-December	Total estimated expenditure
Executive direction and management	25 100	24 400	49 500
Substantive support to the COP and its subsidiary bodies	204 700	430 600	635 300
Facilitation of implementation and coordination	841 600	1 493 900	2 335 500
External relations and public information	138 800	692 000	830 800
Subtotal programmes	**1 210 200**	**2 640 900**	**3 851 100**
13 per cent United Nations programme support costs	157 300	343 300	500 600
Total expenditures	**1 367 500**	**2 984 200**	**4 351 700**

Table 2. Supplementary Fund: summary of actual 1999 expenditure as at 30 June 1999, by object of expenditure

(US dollars)

Object of expenditure	Amount
Staff costs	-
Other personnel-related costs	25 100
Consultants and experts	137 900
Travel of participants and representatives	62 900
Travel of staff	90 300
Contractual services	23 000
Grants	871 000
Subtotal expenditures	**1 210 200**
13 per cent United Nations programme support costs	157 300
Total expenditures	**1 367 500**

Table 3. Supplementary Fund: contributions and outstanding pledges in 1999
(as at 31 August 1999)

Donor country /organization	Contribution (US dollars)	Outstanding pledges	
		Pledge	US dollars equivalenta/
Argentina	-	US$ 15 000	15 000
Belgium	57 445	-	-
Canada	23 121	Can$ 2 500	1 678
Chile	5 000	-	-
Finland	55 292	Fmk 230 000	40 464
France	44 344	-	-
Germany	-	DM 15 000	8 022
Italy	284 000	-	-
Italy	-	Lit 200 000 000	108 045
Italy	-	Lit 200 000 000	108 045
Italy	-	US$ 101 700	101 700
Italy	-	US$ 109 950	109 950
Japan	1 800 024	-	-
Mexico	20 000	-	20 000
Netherlands	25 000	-	-
Norway	-	NKr 200 000	25 189
Spain	158 644	-	-
Switzerland	80 536	Sw F 525 000	343 137
United Kingdom	30 000	-	-
United States of America	-	US$ 50 000	50 000
United States of America	-	US$ 55 000	55 000
United States of America	-	US$ 100 000	100 000
IFAD	30 000	-	-
IFAD	-	US$ 90 000	90 000
IFAD	-	-	70 000
OAU	-	US$ 100 000	100 000
UNEP	140 000	US$ 20 000	20 000
UNEP	-	US$ 50 000	50 000
WMO	30 314	-	-
WMO	-	Sw F 36 800	24 052
Total	**2 763 720**		**1 423 942**

Note: IFAD = International Fund for Agricultural Development
OAU = Organization of African Unity
UNEP = United Nations Environment Programme
WMO = World Meteorological Organization

a/ Using United Nations exchange rate of August 1999.

B. Executive direction and management

6. During the reporting period, six work-months of temporary clerical and secretarial support required under this programme were funded under the Supplementary Fund from contributions received from the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). It is projected that another six work-months of clerical and secretarial support will be financed for the rest of 1999.

C. Substantive support to the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies

1. Traditional knowledge

7. Activities related to work on traditional knowledge were facilitated by the secretariat under the Supplementary Fund. The activities were undertaken in response to the following requests made to the secretariat by the Conference of the Parties during its second session:

(a) To complete its ongoing work on compiling the most important and widely applied traditional knowledge on a regional and subregional basis and on a national scale, where appropriate (decision 14/COP.2, para. 1). The secretariat was assisted by a consultant in the preparation of a synthesis on important and widely applied traditional knowledge on a subregional and regional basis and on a national scale (ICCD/COP(3)/CST/2);

(b) To explore the ways and means of linking the work of the Committee on traditional knowledge with similar work being undertaken under other related conventions and to report to the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) thereon at its third session (decision 14/COP.2, para. 2(a)). The secretariat was assisted by a consultant in the preparation of a report on linkage of the work of the CST on traditional knowledge with that of related conventions (ICCD/COP(3)/CST/3/Add.1), which included travel for consultation with the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);

(c) To prepare a report on traditional knowledge in dryland ecosystems drawing on the discussions that took place at the second session of the Committee on Science and Technology (decision 14/COP.2, para. 2(b)). The secretariat was assisted by a consultant in the preparation of this report on dryland ecosystems (ICCD/COP(3)/CST/3/Add.2); and

At the same session, the Conference of the Parties decided to appoint an ad hoc panel composed of ten experts and defined its terms of reference (decision 14/COP.2, para. 3). The panel was convened in Matera, Italy, from 15 to 18 July 1999, with the travel of participants and experts financed from contributions received under the Supplementary Fund (estimated travel costs: US$ 18,000).

2. CST Bureau meeting

8. By decision 12/COP.2, the Conference of the Parties requested the secretariat to facilitate the convening of at least one inter-sessional meeting of the Bureau of the CST in order to review decisions taken by the Conference of the Parties and other related matters regarding its work, especially the planning and organization of the next session of the CST. The secretariat convened the Bureau meeting in Bonn from 27 to 28 July 1999, at which experts were invited to make presentations on early warning systems and traditional knowledge. The costs of interpretation services were funded under the Supplementary Fund. Travel of eligible CST Bureau members and experts were funded under the core budget.

3. Early warning systems

9. At its second session, the Conference of the Parties decided that the priority issue to be addressed in depth by the Committee on Science and Technology at its third session should be early warning systems in the broadest sense (decision 12/COP.2). In order to prepare a full day devoted to this topic at the third session of the CST, the secretariat, in cooperation with the Italian Government, is organizing a meeting in Niamey, Niger, from 25 to 28 October 1999 (estimated cost: US$ 109,950).

4. Symposium on El Niño

10. The first regional conference of the Latin America and the Caribbean region decided to organize a symposium on El Niño and La Niña, phenomena which affect many regions of the world, particularly Latin America and the Caribbean. A symposium is tentatively planned in Chile from 12 to 15 October 1999. Some organizations, such as the World Meteorological Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Italian cooperation agency have already expressed willingness to contribute to this symposium (estimated cost: US$ 306,000).

D. Facilitation of implementation and coordination

Table 4. Estimated 1999 expenditure
(thousands of US dollars, rounded)

	Actual January-June[1]	Projected July-December	Total estimated 1999
Africa	704.6	689.0	1 393.6
Asia	39.6	399.3	438.9
Latin America and the Caribbean	93.5	265.6	359.1
Northern Mediterranean and other European countries	3.9	140.0	143.9
Subtotal	**841.6**	**1 493.9**	**2 335.5**
13 per cent programme support cost	109.4	194.2	303.6
Total	**951.0**	**1 688.1**	**2 639.1**

11. Activities facilitated under this heading are undertaken at the national, subregional, regional and interregional levels.

12. At the national level, the secretariat continues to facilitate national awareness seminars on the Convention. By promoting contacts between the various partners working at the national level, these seminars facilitate the integration into the implementation process of all interested national stakeholders, including institutions or organizations that may not yet have been involved in the process. As presentation and exchange forums, these seminars also provide the opportunity to bring together important actors in civil society, as well as field representatives of donor agencies.

13. Subregional and regional activities facilitated aim to promote the UNCCD implementation through enhancing subregional and regional cooperation, as desertification is a phenomenon which has very important subregional and regional dimensions. Such activities can work both horizontally, in promoting regional cooperation, and vertically, in encouraging national level activities. The secretariat supports these activities in a manner that is conducive to achieving the Convention's objectives.

14. Subregional consultation processes take the form of meetings organized by a competent subregional organization, acting as coordinating agency, with the support of the secretariat. They bring together representatives of the governments of a given subregion, donor countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to discuss measures to be taken to promote the implementation of the Convention in the subregion.

15. These meetings and workshops provide all parties involved with an opportunity to increase their level of knowledge about the Convention and to formulate a clear and common view of their obligations and respective roles.

1. Africa

National level

16. Using contributions to the Supplementary Fund and in collaboration with competent international or regional organizations, the secretariat was able to facilitate in June 1999 the holding of national awareness seminars in Togo and Nigeria.

17. Funds have also been allocated to Benin, Chad, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nigeria and Togo to foster the consultative and participatory processes geared to elaborating national action programmes (NAPs). More specifically, funding was provided as support to national coordinating bodies, to train national experts in matters pertaining to implementation of the UNCCD and to carry out specific studies. A national forum for the validation of the national environmental action plan was held in Lome (Togo), on 7 and 8 June 1999. The meeting adopted the plan with a number of recommendations and priority programmes.

18. Technical support has been provided through the secretariat of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to some member States (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia) with the objective of strengthening their efforts in the context of the national action programme processes.

19. The secretariat also allocated a grant to the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for assistance towards the formulation of NAPs in the IGAD member States.

20. A major issue in the first six months of 1999 was the elaboration of national reports on the implementation of the Convention by African country Parties. In this context, the secretariat financed, through the subregional institutions (i.e. the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), IGAD, and SADC) the services of local experts, to assist, upon request, the national coordinating bodies in the formulation of the national reports. During their missions, the experts also held consultations mainly with local authorities and discussed with them ways and means to implement the Convention in the respective countries. To provide African national focal points, as coordinators of the preparation of the national reports, with relevant materials, the secretariat allocated a grant to the United Nations Institute for Training and Research to prepare a technical help guide (see document ICCD/COP(3)/INF.3).

21. Briefing sessions for national African focal points on the procedures for elaboration of national reports were organized in March 1999, by the four relevant subregional organizations with the support of the secretariat. On the same occasion, participants reported on and discussed progress made in the implementation of the UNCCD in their countries.

22. During the second half of 1999, it is planned to facilitate the organization of national forums in three countries: Morocco, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania (estimated cost: US$ 60,000).

Subregional level

23. The subregional consultative processes are well under way in the four subregions of Africa. During the reporting period the secretariat granted financial support to CILSS and AMU for the organization of subregional forums: in Lome, Togo, 20-25 May 1999, the ministers for environment adopted the framework of a subregional action programme (SRAP) for Western Africa, following an expert meeting attended by government representatives, non-governmental organizations and donor organizations; the first draft of the subregional action programme for North Africa was presented to the experts on 6-7 July and will be discussed at the forum in Algiers in September. The secretariat allocated a grant contribution to the AMU secretariat to facilitate the organization of the forum on the SRAP for the Maghreb subregion. Financial support has been granted to SADC and IGAD to enable them to carry out their missions in the formulation phases of priority projects (e.g. early warning systems) in the context of their SRAP.

24. The promotion of pilot projects in transboundary areas of CILSS and AMU member States has been successfully reactivated. During a consultation in Geneva (25-26 January 1999), representatives of CILSS and UMA made presentations on ongoing formulation missions. To date, grants have been provided for the formulation of four projects (Algeria/Tunisia, Burkina Faso/Niger, Mali/Algeria/Niger, Mali/Mauritania), which, with regard to their implementation, have already been submitted to different donors for possible contributions.

25. During the second half of 1999, the secretariat will provide financial support to IGAD and SADC to enable them to proceed with the formulation and implementation of the SRAP (estimated cost: US$ 38,000). In addition, it is planned to facilitate the organization of the forum on the SRAP for the IGAD subregion (estimated cost US$ 40,000). Grants will also be provided for formulation and implementation of pilot projects in transboundary areas of CILSS and AMU member States (estimated cost: US$ 300,000).

Regional level

26. In Africa, the secretariat continued to follow the process recommended by the pan-African conference on the implementation of the UNCCD (Ouagadougou, 1997) to promote the elaboration of a regional action programme (RAP). This led to the convening of four more thematic workshops; two had already been organized before July 1998. One final workshop out of a series of seven advocated by the Ouagadougou conference was held from 20 to 23 July in Harare, Zimbabwe. This workshop was organized in close collaboration with the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) and the Government of Zimbabwe (estimated cost: US$ 81,000).

27. The third workshop focused on rational management of rangelands and development of fodder crops and was organized together with the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (4-7 August 1998); the fourth workshop dealt with integrated management of international river, lake and hydrogeological basins in Africa and was organized jointly with the African Development Bank (ADB) in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire (29 September to 2 October 1998); the theme of the fifth workshop was renewable energy and eco-technologies, organized jointly with the energy programme of the World Bank, the Energy and Environment Institute of the Francophone Countries (IEPF) and the Tunisian National Agency for Renewable Energies, in Tunis, Tunisia (26-29 October 1998); the sixth workshop, on the promotion of sustainable agricultural farming systems, was backed by the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), and took place in Sadore, Niger (23-26 March 1999).

28. The process of establishing a regional coordination unit in Africa has been initiated. Pursuant to the conclusion of the agreement establishing this unit, the secretariat hired on a short-term basis the services of an African expert who will be coordinating the formulation process of the regional action programme and be based in Abidjan, hosted by the African Development Bank (estimated cost of start-up activities: US$ 70,000).

29. During the second half of 1999, the secretariat will facilitate the organization of the first forum on the regional action programme to combat desertification in Africa (Nairobi, September 1999). This meeting will be co-organized by UNEP and the UNCCD secretariat (estimated cost: US$ 100,000).

2. Asia

National level

30. National workshops on the implementation of the UNCCD were held:

(a) In Islamabad, Pakistan (22-23 May 1999). This was organized by a Pakistan non-governmental organization jointly with the Government of Pakistan (see also paragraph 47(c) below) to assess the progress made in UNCCD implementation in Pakistan and identify further measures to facilitate implementation; and

(b) In Yemen (30 May - 2 June 1999) to review the national action plan to combat desertification and land resource degradation.

31. Requests have been received to facilitate a workshop to examine the progress of Convention implementation at the national level in the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Vientiane, 14-16 September), and national awareness seminars, also in September, on implementing the UNCCD in Cambodia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka (estimated cost: US$ 33,400).

32. During the remainder of 1999, it is planned to provide institutional support to five States of Central Asian (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) to strengthen their focal points (estimated cost: US$ 165,000).

Regional level

33. To advance the preparation of the thematic programme networks (TPN) which constitute the regional action programme for Asia, an international expert group meeting was held, in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), in Bangkok, Thailand (10-13 November 1998). Outlines, time-frame and proposed regional institutional arrangements were discussed, in particular, networks on desertification monitoring and assessment (TPN1), agroforestry and soil conservation (TPN2) and rangeland management and sand dune fixation (TPN3).

34. In cooperation with the Government of China, the secretariat facilitated three Asian regional meetings in Beijing: the Africa-Asia Workshop on Early Warning Systems (22-23 July 1999); the Second Asian National Focal Points Meeting (24-25 July 1999); and the Launching Meeting of the TPN1 (26-27 July 1999) (estimated cost: US$ 157,900).

35. The secretariat has also been engaged in consultations with the Governments of India and Iran concerning the launching of the TPN2 and TPN3, which have been tentatively scheduled for February and March 2000, respectively.

36. It is envisaged to facilitate the setting-up of the Asian Regional Coordination Unit in September 1999, at an estimated cost of US$ 43,000 for the remainder of 1999.

3. *Latin America and the Caribbean*

National level

37. Three national awareness seminars were held in the region during the period under review. These seminars were organized to provide the stimulus at the national level for the formulation and implementation of national action programmes and provided an opportunity for those concerned to share their views on the problems, but more importantly on the way forward in dealing with them. The national seminars facilitated were as follows:

(a) San Jose, Costa Rica (28-30 January). The event was specially geared to working towards the formulation of a national action programme for the country. The seminar involved all sectors of the society, including the private sector and was able to produce the broad outlines of a plan, which is now under further development;

(b) Bridgetown, Barbados (31 May-1 June). The seminar brought together all major stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, to discuss all matters relating to the question of land degradation. Papers were presented on topics ranging from water use and management, to mining and its contribution to the problem of land degradation on the island;

(c) Roseau, Dominica (7-10 June). The seminar covered issues related to existing land degradation, as well as the general subject of land use and management. It also identified key areas of concern for a future plan to deal with land degradation. A national youth forum on issues of land degradation was also organized on this occasion.

38. During the second half of 1999, there are plans to facilitate the organization of national awareness seminars in Colombia and Jamaica at an estimated cost of US$ 16,000.

Regional level

39. In May, the UNCCD facilitated the establishment of the regional coordinating unit for Latin America and the Caribbean by providing a grant for this purpose. The unit, which was set up in accordance with decision 6 of the fourth regional meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean, is responsible for the general coordination of the regional action programme.

40. During the last six months of 1999, the secretariat will provide further financial assistance to facilitate the operation of the Regional Information Network on Desertification and Drought in Latin America and the Caribbean (DESELAC). This network links the whole region and facilitates sharing of information, the hosting of workshops, and the production of an on-line news bulletin (estimated cost: US$ 25,000).

41. Moreover, it is planned to facilitate the holding of the fifth regional meeting for Parties from Latin America and the Caribbean (Lima, Peru, 9-12 August). This meeting, will among other things, review the implementation of the regional action programme, agree upon a scale of contributions for the functioning of the regional coordinating unit, and set in motion the process for the preparation of national reports to be presented at the fourth session of the Conference of Parties. More than 30 Parties from the region will participate in the meeting (estimated cost: US$ 120,000).

4. *Northern Mediterranean and other European regions*

National level

42. During the reporting period, the secretariat provided substantive support and/or financial assistance to facilitate the following activities under this heading:

(a) Preparatory activities related to the formulation of a national action programme in the Republic of Moldova;

(b) Promotion of the ratification of or accession to the Convention by nine countries of eastern and central Europe, and by two countries of western Europe;

(c) Discussion on activities to be considered in the framework of the elaboration of a national action programme in Spain (22 April 1999); and

(d) National awareness day in Estonia (19 May 1999).

43. In the second half of 1999, it is planned to provide institutional support to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova to strengthen the role of their national focal points in coordinating national activities related to the implementation of the Convention (estimated cost: US$ 140,000).

Interregional level

44. As co-organizer with the city of Bonn and IFAD, the secretariat provided support in the preparation and organization of the World Forum of Mayors on Cities and Desertification (Bonn, Germany, 11-12 June). It also recruited a consultant to prepare a UNCCD background document and contribute as a resource person to the forum.

E. External relations and public information

1. Coordination with non-governmental organizations

45. The secretariat continues to promote grass-roots involvement in the implementation of the Convention by facilitating and coordinating activities related to the involvement of affected communities in the implementation of the Convention, as well as by promoting initiatives for dissemination of information on Convention implementation. This is done mainly in collaboration with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Grants are paid to help defray the costs of Convention-related activities and to strengthen the institutional capacity of non-governmental organizations to implement the Convention.

46. Activities and projects undertaken in 1999 which received funding from the Supplementary Fund include:

(a) A subregional non-governmental organization meeting in the North African region (Algiers, Algeria, 22-24 February 1999). This subregional meeting provided an opportunity for North African non-governmental organizations to raise awareness of the Convention process, exchange views, and coordinate their activities. The meeting was also useful in informing participants of the national action programme process and the reporting process required for the third session of the COP. The meeting identified the following priority areas for non-governmental organizations in the subregion: the need for increased awareness-raising in the region; the usefulness of the exchange of information and experience with other African subregions and the need for support to strengthen the capacity of non-governmental organizations in the region;

(b) A national non-governmental organization workshop organized by RIOD-Argentina1/ in partnership with the Government of Argentina (Cordoba, Argentina, 5 May 1999) on desertification, poverty and gender. The workshop was part of the national action programme activities of the Government and aimed to bring together representatives of the non-governmental and governmental community to discuss gender and poverty issues as they relate to desertification and to incorporate the recommendations of the workshop into the national action programme;

(c) A national non-governmental organization workshop and a regional workshop were held in Islamabad, Pakistan, 22-26 May 1999. The workshops offered organizations in the region an opportunity to brainstorm on the possibility of creating a multi-stakeholder coalition to support the implementation of the Convention in the region;

1/ RIOD = International Network of Non-Governmental Organizations on Desertification.

(d) An awareness-raising campaign undertaken simultaneously in Europe, North America, Asia and Australia to raise awareness of the importance of the Convention and the importance of continuing the ratification process. Media packets were sent to non-governmental organizations and journalists and numerous meetings, discussions and dialogues were held with parliamentarians and senators. The campaign was effective in building awareness of the Convention and placing the subject of ratification and the importance of assistance for its implementation on the priority list of numerous high-ranking officials.

(e) Institutional support to nine non-governmental organizations in Central Asia. Many of the projects supported emphasized the need for simplified local-language information materials. In addition, most activities contained a component aimed at strengthening the gender balance within the implementing organization and also in the implementation process of the project. The role of women in combating land degradation and the importance of encouraging their contribution to the national action programme was also emphasized. The minimal institutional support provided to the nine organizations enabled them to steadily build a foundation of awareness of the UNCCD process, encourage networking and exchange of information amongst all stakeholders and begin targeting non-governmental organization input to the national action programme. The support also encouraged the usage of successful methods in combating land degradation. In addition, the institutional support empowered non-governmental organizations to cultivate a productive partnership with their government counterparts and thus lay the foundation for continuing collaboration in the NAP process.

47. In the second half of 1999, it is planned to:

(a) Facilitate the participation of at least 15 non-governmental organization representatives to the general meeting of RIOD, to be held in Dakar, Senegal, in August 1999 (US$ 30,000);

(b) Assist some 10 non-governmental organizations to enhance their national-level, institutional capacity to contribute to national action programmes (US$ 100,000);

(c) Facilitate the exchange of experience and information by supporting the organization of, and the participation of non-governmental organization representatives in, two intergovernmental forums in Africa and Asia (US$ 16,000);

(d) Facilitate the exchange of experience and information on a regional level by supporting the organization of, and the participation of non-governmental organization representatives in, the intergovernmental regional meeting of Latin American countries (Lima, Peru, August 1999) (US$ 28,000);

(e) Facilitate the participation of some 60 non-governmental organizations in global level meetings, particularly the third session of the COP (COP 3) and its subsidiary bodies, including preparatory work required (Recife, 15-26 November 1999) (US$ 279,000);

(f) Assist the preparation of non-governmental organization events parallel to COP 3 and preparations for the official dialogue between non-governmental organizations and governments during COP 3 (US$ 25,000);

(g) Facilitate two workshops on the promotion of south/south and north/south non-governmental organization partnerships and thereafter the implementation of ten north/south and south/south pilot project partnerships (US$ 120,000); and

(h) Assist the preparation of studies and reports on the participatory approach, consultative mechanisms, enhancing the role of women and community awareness-raising materials (US$ 20,000).

2. Public information

48. An important activity of the secretariat is to raise and sustain public awareness of the problem of desertification and to promote the Convention and its implementation.

49. The General Assembly proclaimed 17 June as "World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought" (resolution A/49/115). Observance of this day provides a focus for the secretariat's public information activities.

50. In order to maximize and strengthen implementation activities, the secretariat continues to seek ways for the Convention to be more widely known, in both developed and developing countries, among policy and decision makers in governments, non-governmental organizations, media professionals, and specialized interest groups. Activities facilitated during the reporting period to this end were as follows:

(a) Publications and information dissemination:

(i) Publication of the first issue of the 1999 UNCCD newsletter (2,000 copies English, 1,500 copies French) in collaboration with the UNEP Information Unit on Conventions (UNEP/IUC) and made available at the end of May for distribution by mail, as well as on the occasion of UNCCD public events. In particular, it was distributed to the press, and to the participants in the Mayors' forum in Bonn (see paragraph 45 above), as well as to COP participants and other interested individuals and organizations. Now at its 11th issue, the newsletter represents the most immediate tool for the UNCCD to communicate on ongoing processes, events and initiatives related to the implementation of the Convention;

(ii) Updating and reprinting of the UNCCD kits in collaboration with UNEP/IUC: 1,500 copies of the Convention text in English, 3,000 copies of the English version of the UNCCD kit, and 1,500 copies of the Spanish version. Copies were made available at the end of May for immediate distribution on the occasion of the many seminars and public awareness initiatives organized worldwide by the secretariat, UNCCD focal points and/or non-governmental organizations;

(b) Production in German of the Lupo Alberto comics booklet (4,000 copies) to provide civil society and the media with easily accessible information on the UNCCD, its activities and mandate. Distribution of these began in Bonn on the occasion of the Mayors' Forum, the World Day to Combat Desertification, and the Fair of Opportunities;

(c) In collaboration with the Centre for International Cooperation (CIC-Bonn), publication of the German version of the entire UNCCD kit (2,500 copies), including the Convention text (1,500 copies), as well as the German version of the UNCCD *Down to Earth* booklet (2,500 copies), in order to meet the high demand from different sectors for information on the Convention. Printing of these should be completed by the end of July;

(d) Other printing and publications undertaken during the reporting period: the English version of the comics booklet (4,000 copies); new films produced to update and correct the earlier version in French, Spanish and Italian; the 1999 updated UNCCD calendar (500 copies); a poster to commemorate the World Day to Combat Desertification; UNCCD stickers (5,000 copies) bearing the UNCCD logo and wording in four languages; and a multi-purpose UNCCD stationery and card;

(e) Events, campaigns, awareness-raising initiatives.

51. The secretariat organized an informal event on the eve of the Mayors' Forum in Bonn (10 June). About 150-200 guests, including mayors and other participants, were invited to Haus Carstanjen.

52. During the second half of 1999, it is planned to:

(a) Produce the second issue of the 1999 UNCCD newsletter in collaboration with UNEP/IUC (October 1999) (US$ 5,000);

(b) Produce media fact sheets which provide background documentation on specific issues, based on the most common requests of the media (October 1999) (US$ 2,000);

(c) Produce COP 3 memorabilia, in particular the following: UNCCD bags in collaboration with Brazilian and Spanish fair trade groups; UNCCD greetings cards in collaboration with the 1997 comics artists; UNCCD calendar (US$ 30,000);

(d) Reprint UNCCD kits as required and provide for updating and revisions (US$ 35,000); and

(e) Reproduce copies of the UNCCD Azimuth videos on desertification case studies (US$ 2,000).

F. General summary

53. In summary, total expenditure projected in 1999 under the Supplementary Fund is currently estimated at **US$ 3,851,100** (US$ 4,351,700 with programme support costs), which is 48.3 per cent less than the original cost estimate of US$ 7,442,800 (US$ 8,410,400 with programme support costs) contained in document ICCD/COP(2)/2. The reduced revised estimate is attributable to the following factors: some activities contained in the cost plan were instead financed directly by donors; some activities were eventually co-financed by other United Nations agencies and programmes thus reducing the costs to the trust fund; some activities envisaged could not take place as the concerned donors needed more time to process the proposals submitted for their consideration or the level of contributions received was not enough to finance the planned activities.

III. SPECIAL FUND

(Special Fund for participation of representatives of eligible States Parties affected by desertification and/or drought in the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies)

Table 5. Special Fund estimated total 1999 expenditure
(thousands of US dollars, rounded)

	Actual*/ January-June	**Projected July-December**	**Total estimated 1999**
Recorded costs	29.7	1 174.5	1 204.2
13 per cent United Nations programme support cost	3.9	152.6	156.5
Total	**33.6**	**1327.1**	**1 360.7**

54. During the reporting period, participation of eight COP Bureau members at an inter-sessional meeting (Bonn, Germany, 23-24 February) was facilitated at a cost of US$ 29,700.

55. In the second half of the year, it is planned to facilitate the participation of eligible members and delegates in the following meetings:

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*/ Based on United Nations Status of Allotment Report as at 30 June 1999 including adjustments.

(a) COP Bureau meeting (Bonn, October) (US $25,000); and

(b) Third session of the Conference of the Parties (Recife, Brazil, 15-26 November), COP and CST Bureau members and approximately 186 participants (US$ 1,149,500)).

56. Total projected expenditure under the Special Fund in 1999 is US$ 1,204,200 (US$ 1,360,700 with programme support costs) which is 34 per cent higher than the original estimate of US$ 900,000 (US$ 1,017,000) contained in document ICCD/COP(2)/2. The projected higher expenditure is mainly due to the anticipated increased number of eligible representatives from developing country Parties whose participation at COP 3 would be financed under this fund.

57. The secretariat will circulate during COP 3, as addendum 1 to this document, a list of countries whose participation has been financed through the Special Fund, together with an updated status of contributions and outstanding pledges received since the submission of this document.

*Table 6. Special Fund: contributions and outstanding pledges in 1999
(As at 16 August 1999)

Donor country/organization	Contributions (US dollars)	Outstanding pledges	
		Pledge	US dollars equivalent[a]
Canada	36 304	-	-
Norway	96 453	-	-
Norway	-	Nkr 550 000	69 270
European Community	-	Euro 62 800	65 690
Total	**132 757**	**-**	**134 960**

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[a] Using United Nations exchange rate of August 1999.